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GLOSSARY OF TERMS

For many of the terms necessary to understand this handbook and professional development, access *A Glossary of Acronyms and Terms from the New Jersey Department of Education* at:

<http://www.state.nj.us/njded/genfo/acronyms.htm>

- **Abbott District** — as defined by *New Jersey Statutes Annotated (N.J.S.A.)* 18A:7F-3, one of the 30 poor urban school districts, primarily in District Factor Groups A & B, specifically identified in the *Abbott v. Burke* funding decision by the New Jersey Supreme Court.
- **Action Research** — educators work collaboratively to form questions about their professional practice; to collect, analyze, and interpret data; to draw conclusions about their practice; and to use the results of this research to enhance and improve their professional practice.
- **Alternate Route** — an alternate certification process that permits qualified individuals lacking education credentials to earn them in the public schools under a mentoring program and to become licensed teachers. It allows talented people to enter teaching after they have worked in other careers.
- **Assessment** — the determination of cumulative achievement in a given area or specific discipline:
 - **APA — Alternate Proficiency Assessment** — the determination of cumulative achievement for students who cannot participate in the general statewide assessments.
 - **ESPA — Elementary School Proficiency Assessment** — a state-developed assessment that measures cumulative achievement of the Core Curriculum Content Standards (CCCS) for students through fourth grade.
 - **GEPA — Grade Eight Proficiency Assessment** — a state-developed assessment that measures cumulative achievement of the CCCS for students through eighth grade. The GEPA is intended to provide information about student progress toward mastery of the skills specified by the CCCS in all seven content areas.
 - **HSPA — High School Proficiency Assessment** — a state-developed assessment that measures cumulative achievement of the knowledge and skills specified by all areas of the CCCS and Workplace Readiness Standards. By 2006-7, the HSPA will test all of the standards. Students must pass all sections of the test as one of the requirements for a high school diploma.

- **SRA — Special Review Assessment** — the opportunity for students to exhibit their understanding and mastery of the HPSA skills in contexts that are familiar and related to their experiences.
- **Collaborative groups** — the process by which educators work together to inquire into practice and reflect upon that practice with the goal of improving teaching techniques and strategies and enhancing student achievement of the CCCS.
- **Core Curriculum Content Standards (CCCS)** — the educational expectations for what students should know and be able to do upon completion of a thirteen-year education in seven academic and five workplace readiness areas which the New Jersey State Board of Education adopted May 1, 1996. The standards are articulated in the following subject areas: visual and performing arts, comprehensive health/physical education, language arts literacy, mathematics, science, social studies and world languages. The five cross-content areas for workplace readiness are: career planning, use of technology information and other tools, critical thinking/decision-making/problem-solving, self-management and safety principles.
- **CCSA — Core Curriculum Standards Aid (CCSA)** — the amount of state aid that is distributed to all school districts for general fund expenses to ensure that each district can provide a thorough and efficient system of education consistent with the CCCS (*N.J.S.A. 18A:7F-12-15*). Such aid is based on a district's relative ability to raise local revenues that will enable them to help students achieve the new standards.
- **Core Curriculum Content Standards for Students with Severe Disabilities (CCCSSTD)** — a subset of the CCCS and alternate cumulative progress indicators for students with severe disabilities, which represent broad, long-range outcomes that emphasize daily living skills.
- **Constructivism** — an education theory that puts students at the center of the learning process so that they construct or develop their understanding of an issue and question issues instead of sitting and receiving teacher knowledge.
- **County Professional Development Board (CPDB)** — the 15-member board charged with reviewing district plans, providing comment to the local committees on their plans, and approving or disapproving the district plans based on the county review process.

- **Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards (CCWRS)** — the five skills, which are to be implemented across the seven curriculum content areas, that students will need to prepare for future careers. The five cross-content areas for workplace readiness are: career planning, use of technology information and other tools, critical thinking/decision-making/problem-solving, self-management and safety principles. These standards are to be integrated into the CCCS.
- **Distance Learning Network** — a statewide network for the delivery of voice, video and data which will link up all districts for the purpose of sharing programs and resources with each other.
- **District Factor Grouping** — a system that provides a means of ranking schools by their socio-economic status (SES). The grouping designation is based on information available from the census and includes the following: percent in community with no high school diploma; percent with some college; occupations; population density; income; unemployment; and poverty. There are eight groupings starting with A which designates the lowest socio-economic level and includes B, CD, DE, FG, GH, I, and J. These groupings allow comparison of districts with similar profiles for purposes of state aid and assessment information.
- **Educational Frameworks** — guidelines produced by the state to assist local districts in developing curricula to implement the Core Curriculum Content Standards.
- **Educational Technology Training Center (ETTC)** — county-based support systems, resource and training centers operating in partnership with institutions of higher education that offer staff development opportunities centered on the NJCCCS and responsive to the educational technology training needs of all teachers from all grade levels K-12, public and nonpublic. Funded by the federal Goals 2000 program and state funds, the ETTCs contain demonstration technology equipment and offer training programs to assist teachers in implementing the Core Curriculum Content Standards.
- **Inclusive Education** — all students in school regardless of their strengths or weaknesses in any area must be included as part of the school community in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE).
- **Inservice training** — the professional preparation of educators during the course of their employment, that is, while they are in service to the profession.
- **Job-embedded professional development** — professional development that is rooted in the context of an educator's daily job and that evolves from the specific roles and responsibilities

of that educator. Job-embedded opportunities take place within the context of a teacher's regular job responsibilities. These opportunities occur as colleagues work together and reflect on research, evaluate current practice, share information and develop strategies for change in classroom practice.

- **Local Professional Development Committee (LPDC)** — the four teachers and two administrators charged with assessing the professional development needs of the staff, developing the district professional development plan, and submitting the district plan to the county board for approval.
- **Mission Statement** — the description or identification of the plan developed to create the vision. A mission statement is a roadmap of what the district intends to do to achieve the vision of professional development.
- **Needs Assessment** — a systematic determination of the specific learning, programmatic or development needs of students, classrooms and professionals using various formal and informal strategies to elicit perceptions and to collect, analyze and interpret data that will help determine a future course of action.
- **Outcome-Based Professional Development** — professional development activities that focus on translating new content and pedagogy into actual classroom practice and measuring its impact on student learning.
- **Paradigm — paradigm shift** — a paradigm is a model of best practice that can serve as a guideline for others. Within the concept of professional development, a paradigm of good professional development would be a model program that educators could use to plan their own professional improvement plan. Within the context of professional development, a paradigm shift occurs when one model of best practice evolves into a better or more effective format or plan, and thus, the concept of what is a best practice "shifts" from less of one type to more of another. For example, the move from more emphasis on teacher needs to more emphasis on student learning outcomes represents a paradigm shift.
- **Preservice training** — the preparation given to prospective educators during their college or university training, that is, before the educator begins work in a school setting.
- **Professional development / staff development** — the process by which educators update their knowledge, refine their skills, inquire into and reflect upon practice, and develop new methods and strategies.

- **Professional Study Group** — group members design and implement a program to study a particular issue and its impact on their class, school district, or on education in general.
- **Professional Teaching Standards Board (PTSB)** — the 19-member board charged with implementing the Professional Development regulations as per 6:11-13.1, including establishing standards and criteria for review and approval of continuing education programs, disseminating a list of providers, and advising the Commissioner of Education on matters related to the Professional Development Code. Nineteen members comprise the board and include the following: ten classroom teachers; two college representatives, at least one of which represents a teacher education program; three district administrators; two members of local boards of education; and two members of the general public.
- **Professional Writing** — teachers learn how to write for professional publications through the experience of doing so.
- **Professional Reading and Discussion** — group members read selected books, journal articles, research reports, etc., and come together for focused, guided discussion about the ideas presented and about how those ideas can enhance or improve their professional practice.
- **Professional Listening/Viewing and Discussion** — group members view and/or listen to selected books, journal articles, research reports, etc., either on audio or video tape and come together for focused, guided discussion about the ideas presented and about how those ideas can enhance or improve their professional practice.
- **Problem-Solving Group** — members in the group work through a particular problem-solving process to identify the underlying problem in a situation, to plan and implement appropriate solutions, and to examine changes in practice and effects on student learning.
- **Provisional Teacher Program** — a program consisting of 30-34 weeks of full time, on the job support, supervision, and evaluation by school-based professionals as part of the teacher certification requirements.
- **Results-driven** — professional development activities that begin with the end in mind, driven by the enhanced student learning outcomes educators would like to see students demonstrate at the end of their learning experiences.
- **Rubric** — a set of prescriptive categories by which a program may be evaluated.

- **School Report Card** — a document prepared and disseminated annually to parents and other interested taxpayers within each school district. The report cards for each school building in the state contain information about student enrollment, test scores, attendance, and graduation rates, as well as information about the teaching and administrative staff (*N.J.S.A. 18A:7E-2*).
- **SMT — School Management Team** required by *N.J.S.A. 6:19A-1.4*, is the building-based planning and decision-making entity. The SMT consists of the building principal and representatives of parents, teachers, and the community, and such other persons as will enable the team to implement a sound program of school-based decision-making. The work of the SMT primarily involves the development of a whole school reform implementation plan (*N.J.S.A. 6:19A-3.2*).
- **Stakeholders** — all those involved directly and peripherally in the education process including students, teachers, administrators, parents, school board members, those working in higher education institutions who prepare teachers, business and community members.
- **SRIT — School Review and Improvement Team** — a team of Department of Education staff assigned by the Commissioner to work with Abbott districts in implementing the Court’s decision concerning Whole School Reform (WSR) pursuant to *N.J.S.A. 6:19A-1.3*.
- **Self-directed professional development** — a process by which educators reflect upon their current teaching methodologies and strategies and examine such issues as knowledge of subject matter, instructional techniques, classroom assessment, time management, relationships with peers and with students, planning and preparation, philosophies and beliefs about education and teaching. This examination should lead to the preparation and creation of a personal, or self-directed and organized plan for achieving the desired outcomes.
- **Vision Statement** — the framework around which the professional development plan is developed and the concept of where the district should be at a future point in time. A vision statement reflects the values and beliefs of the district in terms of professional development and forms the basis for the establishment of professional development goals for the district.
- **Whole School Reform (WSR)** models are used to implement the concept of whole school reform. Essentially, the concept of whole school reform combines into a single program all of the individual educational practices and strategies that have been shown over the years to be the most effective in enabling disadvantaged students to achieve. Therefore, the different whole school reform paradigms developed by various experts have common basic elements; yet they differ in their details and emphases.

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As new resources become available, they will be listed at the Department of Education's web site:

www.state.nj.us/njded/profdev/pdresources

AGENCIES AND ORGANIZATIONS

The following agencies or organizations supply useful and relevant resources related to professional development:

Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development

1703 North Beauregard Street

Alexandria, VA 22311-1714

800-933-2723 *phone*

703-575-5400 *fax*

member@ascd.org

www.ascd.org

New Jersey Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development

12 Centre Drive

Jamesburg, NJ 08831-1564

609-860-8991 *phone*

609-860-6677 *fax*

njascd@njascd.org

www.njascd.org

Consortium for Policy Research in Education

Graduate School of Education

University of Pennsylvania

3440 Market Street, Suite 560

Philadelphia, PA 19104-3325

215-573-0700 *phone*

215-573-7914 *fax*

cpre@gse.upenn.edu

www.gse.upenn.edu/cpre

National Commission on Teaching and America's Future

Kutztown Distribution Center

15076 Kutztown Road, PO Box 326

Kutztown, PA 19530-0326

888-492-1241 *phone*

610-683-5616 *fax*

www.tc.edu/nctaf

National Foundation for the Improvement of Education

1201 16th Street, NW

Washington, DC 20036-3207

202-822-7840 *phone*

202-822-7779 *fax*

www.nfie.org

National Partnership for Excellence and Accountability in Teaching

University of Maryland
2204 Benjamin Building, College of Education
College Park, MD 20742
301-405-2341 *phone* www.npeat.org

National Staff Development Council

PO Box 240
Oxford, OH 45056
513-523-6029 *phone* 513-523-0638 *fax*
NSDCOffice@aol.com www.nsd.org

New Jersey Staff Development Council

13 Yorkshire Road
Hamilton, NJ 08610
609-585-0313 *phone*
njsdc@njsdc.org www.njsdc.org

North Central Regional Educational Laboratory

1900 Spring Road, Suite 300
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A Parent's Guide to Professional Development for New Jersey Teachers

BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS AND SCHOOLS

*"We are now at a point where we must educate our children
in what no one knew yesterday,
and prepare our schools for what no one knows yet."
— Margaret Mead —*

What is Professional Development

Sometimes called Staff Development, Professional Development is the term used to describe a variety of opportunities to continually learn, update and improve the knowledge and skills of any professional.

Why do Parents need to know about Professional Development for Teachers?

Teachers and parents are the adults who most directly impact children and how well they learn.

As a parent, you need to know about the changes in your child's classroom: the new learning expectations; the plans that the school has for helping teachers continually improve their practice; and the effects of these plans on your child's education.

As of September 1, 2000 new state regulations will provide guidelines to New Jersey teachers on the type and amount of Professional Development in which they should participate to best help your child learn.

What do the Guidelines do?

The guidelines, called *Standards for Professional Development for NJ Teachers*, serve two main purposes:

1. The Professional Development Standards explain what teachers need to know and be able to do in order to help students reach the new learning standards in New Jersey.
2. The new Professional Development Standards will define the important components of effective Professional Development for Teachers, so that the providers of those services will improve the quality of offerings to NJ teachers.

What is the benefit for my child?

The new learning standards for New Jersey students called Core Curriculum Content Standards and Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Skills, are designed to enable students to meet the challenges of the modern workplace.

For children to learn more, their teachers must continually be learning more. As we raise our expectations for our children, we are also expecting teachers to learn more and do more.

Professional development provides teachers with the skills and knowledge that are critical for continued effectiveness at teaching students the new education requirements.

Parents are part of the community of learners.

Parents play an integral role in assisting student learning. In fact, all of the adults who are important in a child's education need to keep learning. Any adult who comes in contact with your children has an opportunity to influence them.

As a parent, you need to continually improve your understanding about your child's school. You need to understand how the education that your child receives relates to the new expectations for an excellent education. You need to know about the curriculum, which means that you need to be aware of what the school is teaching and why the expectations have changed.

It is true, schools must play their part by giving you information and encouraging you to assist in your child's learning. The school should give you an explanation of the skills that your child needs to learn when he/she reaches each grade level, along with some specific direction so that you can participate in the development of those skills.

There are many ways that an effective partnership can be built between home and school. When you are informed, you can play the important role of education partner by supporting what your child's teacher does in the classroom.

It is only when you have this information that you will be able to fully participate in your child's successful education and in meaningful decision-making at your child's school.

What can parents, students and community members expect?

Teachers and their supervisors will be actively involved in implementing the requirements of this NJ Department of Education initiative. The results of exceptional teaching are most often visible to the public through student achievements, which are the measurable results. Generally speaking, you may not notice any dramatic or immediate changes in your child's day-to-day classroom experience. However, you will ultimately notice the improvements in education because of the higher expectations for both learning and teaching.

Here are some possible changes that you may notice:

- **Planning for child-care during the school year** — When you look at your school district's calendar, you may notice a possible increase in the number of inservice days scheduled for the staff. All children will still be offered at least the minimum 180 days of education each year, as required by law.
- **Preparation periods** — If you previously were offered an opportunity to meet with your child's teacher during his/her "prep" period during the school day, scheduling such meetings during a teacher's workday may become more of a challenge. These preparation periods during a teacher's normal workday will often be used for professional development such as teacher research, observing a new teaching technique, or other such "job-embedded" activities. Your child's teacher knows how important communication is between home and school and still encourages you to freely communicate about your child.
- **Occasional professional days** — Your child may come home from school and tell you that a substitute teacher was in the classroom. Just like in the business community many training sessions and workshops are only offered during the "regular workday." This may mean that from time to time your child's regular teacher may need to be away from the classroom in order to attend a professional development event that will improve his/her abilities to teach your child. Your school district will provide qualified substitute teachers for these few situations.
- **More professionals in the classroom** — If you visit your child's classroom you may notice other educators in the room. These professionals may be involved in observation and evaluation of the teacher's skills. Often, teachers learn best from other teachers who are creatively applying new teaching concepts in an actual classroom rather than in a workshop or seminar. So, while students are learning academic content from the teacher, the adults are learning effective new teaching methods and practices.

- **Changes in tradition** — As your child's teacher learns new, exciting and effective ways to help your child learn, you or your child may notice a mid-year change in the teacher's practice. Helping your child adjust to any changes will ensure that he/she will benefit from the teacher's new skills and knowledge. If you have an older child who had the same teacher, you may notice differences in the way that the teacher handles a variety of instructional or classroom situations after participating in additional professional development.
- **A possible budget impact** — When your school district makes plans for offering additional professional development to the staff, it may need to realign budget line items or look for additional funding sources to provide the types of experiences that will help the children in the district. Parents and community members can feel confident that supporting funding changes for professional development of teachers will ultimately enhance the quality of education for all children in their schools.
- **Local issues** — In order for a teacher's professional development to have the most impact on your child's learning, it must be designed to meet local and individual needs. It is important to understand that this is a statewide initiative, but the teachers in your school district will be learning about the specific issues that will bring the most benefit to the children in your community. Your schools may have different needs than the schools in a neighboring community, and, therefore, will have a unique, individually tailored local Professional Development Plan.

The effects on student learning:

Many national experts have documented the relationship between effective professional development for teachers and improved student learning.

When designing the new Professional Development Standards, New Jersey education leaders consulted with national experts to develop specific requirements that will ensure a positive impact on your child's learning and future success.

Nothing motivates a child more than when learning is valued by families, schools and communities working together in partnership. These forms of involvement do not happen by accident or invitation. We must all keep our focus on children while each of us learns new ways to best help them learn.

Parent, Family and Community Involvement

- Parents and community members can communicate their support for high-quality professional development for teachers to their school board members. In this way your elected representatives will know that you desire and expect your child, and every child in your community, to receive the best education available.
- Individuals serving on local district site-based management teams can prioritize professional development for teachers as a way to improve student learning.
- Mutual respect and two-way communication are important as you develop your relationship between home and school. Share interesting education information as it relates to your child with your child's teacher. By providing ideas and input in a meaningful way, you can let the staff know that you support and encourage them.

Resources and Information

Core Curriculum Content Standards and Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards for New Jersey students: www.state.nj.us/njded/cccs/index.html

Core Curriculum Content Standards for Students with Severe Disabilities:
<http://www.state.nj.us/njded/specialed/cccsssd800.pdf>

Standards for Required Professional Development for New Jersey Teachers
www.state.nj.us/njded/profdev/standards

Information for parents related to education www.state.nj.us/njded/parents/index.html

You may also contact: NJ Professional Teaching Standards Board
c/o Office of Standards & Professional Development
New Jersey Department of Education
P.O. Box 500
Trenton, NJ 08625-0500